

To continue my comments from Wednesday night's hearing in San Antonio about why steps need to be taken to strengthen localism in broadcasting...

I was relaying to you my experience with the superficial TV news coverage from Tuesday night...the first round of 10 news stories on KENS5 (CBS) ran in eight minutes, then two minutes of commercials, then four stories in two minutes, then two minutes of commercials. Then weather.

The weather guy reported that 'arctic air' was coming and gave the forecast.
Then more commercials.

We then switched to KSAT12 (ABC) and they were reporting on weather. The weather guy said, "I don't want to say arctic air, but it's going to cool down."

That comment made me think they were in the same room! How is that diversity in news?

Also, mainstream media lacks sufficient reporting on important issues like the environment and violence, and there is a great lack of stories about immigrants and minorities who succeed. The amount of dollars that Clear Channel gives to charity is good. But it goes to non-controversial charities that already operate with million-dollar-plus budgets, not to the real grassroots groups.

As someone pointed out, the technology exists for Amber Alerts, and as good corporate citizens, media should provide SPA space and sponsorship dollars. These acts of civic duty should not be touted as great achievements.

Further, with the limited and homogenous play lists of mainstream radio, not to mention corporate media ownership of concert venues and production companies, local talent does not get showcased.

Look closely at what broadcasters are teaching our children...greed, violence, dishonesty and disrespect. When media ownership is put into the hands of a few national or global companies, community voices are squelched and news reporting is limited (the rich keep getting richer, usually at the expense of the working class).

In order for news and entertainment to be balanced and diverse, community members must be involved and media ownership must be local and wide spread.

You have the power to save democracy and keep diversity alive.

"A good reason for removing errors of thinking is that we will cease to suffer from them."

- Vernon Howard, author